

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Fewer fattening french fries, more fruit, vegetables, grain in public school meals

Some experts say that if obesity among children continues to increase, they will become the first generation in American history to live shorter lives than their parents.

– William J. Clinton Foundation

A “Recipe for Change” is coming to American public school cafeterias under new guidelines proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Battle Ground Public Schools’ students who eat lunch and/or breakfast at school and now have healthful choices will get even more nutritious meals, including more low-fat milk, and reductions in sodium, fat, starch etc. under changes to be phased in beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

Here’s one example that might generate buzz among students: French fries, which now are offered as an optional vegetable with full-plate lunches every day, will be offered just one day a week under the new federal guidelines, says Mark Jasper of Sodexo Food Services, the school district’s contract food service provider.

The changes to school meal standards, which would add more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat milk to school meals, are based on recommendations by the National Academies’ Institute of Medicine and will be explained in a meeting open to parents, students and the general public.

Meeting Time: 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Day: Tuesday, March 29

Place: Media Center (library), Battle Ground High School, 300 W. Main St.

“These are going to be great changes for the kids,” Jasper said. While the reduction in availability of French fries might not be popular with some students, the changes overall “are a move in a positive direction,” he said.

The changes also include:

- An increase in fruits and vegetables from between three-fourths and one cup per meal total to that amount of vegetables alone and between one-half cup and one cup of fruit.
- Reductions in sodium from more than 1,400 mg now allowed to fewer than 740 mg in 10 years, with other spices used to flavor food.
- A reduction in starchy vegetables such as white potatoes, corn and peas to no more than one cup per week.

Why the change? Numerous academic and medical sources have amassed evidence of American children eating less-nutritious meals and gaining weight. For example:

- Over the past four decades, obesity rates have soared among children of all age groups, increasing nearly five-fold among those ages 6-11.
- Today, nearly 25 million children are overweight or obese.
- Some experts believe that if obesity among children continues to increase, our current generation of children will become the first in American history to live shorter lives than their parents.
- The average teen eats fast food twice a week.
- Only 3 out of 10 of high school seniors report eating green vegetables “nearly every day or more.”

--Source: www.clintonfoundation.org/what-we-do/alliance-for-a-healthier-generation/why-childhood-obesity-/facts-about-childhood-obesity

More information:

US Dept. of Agriculture: www.fns.usda.gov/cnd

US Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/pdf/us_obesity_combo.pdf

Sodexo Food Services, www.sodexousa.com [Battle Ground office: (360) 885-6539]



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